IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-5, 7-14, 17-19 and 21-24 are pending in the present application. Claims 4, 5 and 19 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-3, 7-14, 17, 18 and 21-24 are rejected. A complete listing of pending claims is provided below.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for differentiating between ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease by testing a fecal sample for an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, the method comprising:

obtaining a fecal sample from a person presenting with inflammatory bowel disease; and

determining whether there is an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies in the sample, wherein an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies is an indicator of ulcerative colitis.

2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein if the sample contains an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, diagnosing ulcerative colitis.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein if the sample contains an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, ~~utilizing the elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies to differentiate~~ differentiating between ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

diluting the fecal sample.

8. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 7, further comprising:

contacting the fecal sample with neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens to create a treated sample.

9. (Original) The method as recited in claim 8, further comprising:

contacting the treated sample with polyvalent antibodies to human immunoglobulin to create a readable sample.

10. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 9, further comprising:

determining an optical density of the readable sample at 450 nm, wherein the optical density corresponds to a level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies in the sample.

11. (Currently amended) A diagnostic assay for differentiating between ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease by determining whether a fecal sample contains an elevated level of anti-neutophil cytoplasmic antibodies ~~the optical density of the readable sample and diagnosing ulcerative colitis by determining the anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies~~, the assay comprising:

obtaining a human fecal sample from a person presenting with inflammatory bowel disease;

diluting the fecal sample;

contacting the diluted sample with neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens to create a treated sample;

contacting the treated sample with polyvalent antibodies to human immunoglobulin to create a readable sample;

determining the optical density of the readable sample at 450 nm;[.]

determining whether the optical density indicates an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, where an elevated level of anti-neutophil cytoplasmic antibodies is an indicator of ulcerative colitis.

12. (Previously presented) The diagnostic assay as recited in claim 11, wherein if the readable sample contains anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, diagnosing ulcerative colitis.

13. (Previously presented) The diagnostic assay as recited in claim 12, wherein the anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies are one of IgG, IgE, IgM, IgD, IgA_{sec}, IgA, and combinations thereof.

14. (Previously presented) The diagnostic assay as recited in claim 11, wherein the assay is selected from a group consisting of an enzyme-linked immunoassay and a lateral flow membrane test.

15. (Previously Canceled)

16. (Previously Canceled)

17. (Currently amended) A method for screening for ulcerative colitis in persons presenting with inflammatory bowel disease, the method comprising:

obtaining a fecal sample from a person presenting with inflammatory bowel disease;

determining whether anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies are present in the sample; and

~~if so,~~ diagnosing ulcerative colitis if anti-neutrophil cytomplasmic antibodies are present in the sample.

18. (Currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein if the sample contains an elevated level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, ~~utilizing the elevated level to differentiate~~ differentiating between ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Canceled)

21. (Original) The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising:

diluting the sample.

22. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 21, further comprising:

contacting the diluted sample with neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens to create a treated sample.

23. (Original) The method as recited in claim 22, further comprising:

contacting the treated sample with polyvalent antibodies to human immunoglobulin to create a readable sample.

24. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 23, further comprising: determining an optical density of the readable sample at 450 nm, wherein the optical density corresponds to a level of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies in the sample.

25. (Canceled)